

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 173 991

FL 008 568

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TITLE Transactional Engineering for the Language Teacher:
The Third Force in Language Teaching.
INSTITUTION Alberta Teachers Association, Edmonton. Modern
Language Council.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 42p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the
Modern Language Council (Banff Springs, Alberta,
Canada, October 23, 1976)
JOURNAL CIT Alberta Modern Language Journal: v15 n2 p11-43 Win
1976-77
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Acculturation; Audiolingual Skills; Bilingualism;
Classroom Communication; Communicative Competence
(Languages); *Conversational Language Courses; *Cross
Cultural Training; Cultural Education; Discourse
Analysis; Ethnicity; *Language Instruction;
Postsecondary Education; *Second Language Learning;
*Speech Communication; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Transactional Engineering

ABSTRACT

Talk is proposed as the subject matter of foreign language courses. The key to acquiring liberated expression lies in the assimilation of the learner to the target culture. Once he/she is assimilated, the learner's involvement in a situation matches the involvement of natives of the target culture. For example, faced with some life circumstance the learner notices and interprets the clues of the event as natives do. This standardization process is controlled by the language teacher. As the learner acquires "standardized imaginings" to daily situations, the resultant involvements precipitate spontaneous talk. The pedagogic strategy consists of arranging the learners' social environment so as to provide them with real life exchanges in addition to practice exchanges. Transactional exchanges that are made real have the power to spontaneously evoke topicalization behavior (dialogue). A model is proposed which outlines six stages of language learning. The first three relate to practice talk (differentiating situational units, practicing interactional routines, accumulating ethnicity information) and the second three relate to situated talk (enacting situated exchanges, managing episodal exchanges, executing liberated expression). Illustrative activities are given for each of the six phases. (Author/JB)

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TRANSACTIONAL ENGINEERING
FOR THE LANGUAGE TEACHER:

THE THIRD FORCE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

by

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(This article was read by LAJ as the Keynote Address to the annual convention of The Modern Language Council, Alberta Teachers Association, Banff Springs, Canada, October 23, 1976.)

Appeared in:

Alberta Modern Language Journal

Vol 15 (2), Winter 1976-77, 11-43

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1. Prefatory Remarks

Language teachers nowadays are assuming a defensive posture vis-a-vis the ideal of liberated expression as the goal of a student's involvement in the study of a language. Dr. Gordon and I would like to provide you with some solid rationales for no longer feeling defensive about this ideal goal; and further, to sketch in for you pragmatic approaches to the engineering of such a goal. We are particularly happy to be able to use this platform for serving this function to language teachers. Three years ago, this organization saw fit to invite me to this platform. It is during that time that we had our first public occasion to present the results of our labors under the rubric of "transactional engineering for language teachers." So, now, you have asked us to return and present to you the progress we have effected in these past three years.

That is why we are particularly pleased to present this new version here, and thereby perhaps effect a link between this body of teachers in Alberta, here today, and the rest of the world. And so, let the profession tune in on this exchange and hear the facts about the engineering of liberated expression.

2. Talk is Spontaneous

Consider the paradox that lies in the issue: Is discourse production a process of composition, or is it spontaneous evocation? To say that coherent discourse is an elaborate multidimensional activity involving rule governed juxtapositions of grammatical classes is not only a mouthful but violates as well our objective experience about talk.

The late Paul Goodman, avant-garde educational reformer, poet, popular philosopher, and co-founder of Gestalt Psychology, was once accosted by a cognitive psychologist who questioned him during a public lecture at the Manoa

campus of the University of Hawaii. The questioner had appealed to the cold logic that ideas preceded words and therefore the study of ideas in the form of cognitive psychology, was indeed essential to the understanding of meaning and communication.

Paul Goodman looked at the man and thundered at him across the colloquium hall: "Nonsense, man. When I talk I haven't got a single idea in my head." The simple authoritativeness of the remark struck us in our intellectual allegiance. With one affirmative blow, we were liberated from our preoccupation with discourse as an act of composition. Instead, we accepted the objective experience of the spontaneity of talk. Talk is one of the fastest things we do as teamwork. To interpose a cumbersome cognitive apparatus between talkers and to locate it inside their heads isn't much to our liking, and besides, it's much too slow to be a practical idea.

On the other hand, to say that talk is spontaneous or that discourse is evoked does not seem quite justified, by itself. The issue for language teachers is quite practical, immediate and urgent: How do we facilitate the evolution of practice-talk to real talk where topicalization is spontaneous? We wish to present here some pragmatic rationales for considering talk as the subject matter of the language course.

It is appropriate and standard for us to claim that our proposal is an application of our theoretical research. In this case, we identify our field as being delimited by three particular aspects on talk which we and our students at the University of Hawaii have come to call "educational psycholinguistics," "ethnosemantics," and "transactional engineering." These three areas represent three distinct views on talk. Educational Psycholinguistics focuses on the use of talk as a medium of instruction and communication in school, at home, on T.V. or in books.

Ethnosemantics rationalizes through formal theory the coherence that lies in spontaneous talk, written discourse, and discourse thinking or interior dialogue. It is, in other words, a focus on the structure of topic in discourse.

Transactional Engineering is an operational application of information synthesized from the analysis of records of exchanges of talk in real situations and settings. Our claim to the usefulness of transactional engineering to the language teacher is therefore predicated upon the presumption that talk forms the subject-matter of the language class. The student in the language class is either a foreigner or a stranger: he is confronted with the task of getting informed about the talking practices of regulars from some other place.

The language teacher is a live embodiment of one of these regulars in so far as he acts like one of them. The student's task is to imitate and get informed; the teacher's task is to act as an informant, act, that is, as a regular would, and at the same time, act as a teacher as well. This twin-requirement of the language teacher's position needs to be specifically addressed.

3. Everybody is a Foreigner/Regular

According to our proposal, a social setting frames all behavior. Therefore, using a language, making an assertion, developing an argument, topicalizing by reciting appropriate expressions, are activities or performances that are always situated. We use the term situated display to refer to any conventionalized or recognizable unit of behavior, or alternately, to whatever a group member regularly notices about a situation. Standardized imaginings refers to the common observation that the noticeables of any situation are held in common, no doubt so as to allow individuals to recognize each other's reactions in any interactive setting. These jointly held noticeables can be referred to as the group's display repertoire whose content and dimensionality of variance

characterize ethnicity. We use the term ethnicity to refer to locale-specified practices, that is, the differential impressions one would obtain as one moves from one social locale to another. All of us move through locales in which we are at first foreigners, then become regulars--with shades in between. Furthermore, we may alternate between the two positions several times in the course of a day, and even, in the course of a single conversational episode. Thus, (a) ethnicity information is particular, (b) refers to knowing one's way around, and (c) varies both horizontally across geo-political locales, and vertically across transactional and topical zones of interaction.

Shared ethnicity information allows regulars in a locale to maintain what sociologist Ervin Goffman has called 'an appearance of normalcy': law and order, etiquette, face work, respectability, public knowledge, common sense--these are the achieved appearances needed to be attained in order to become a regular in a group. Once assimilated to a locale, an individual's involvement in the happenings there, evoke his imaginings in a straightforward standard manner. These standardized imaginings become the occasion for spontaneous talk. Discourse gets pulled out, as it were, through the person's involvement in the setting. Here is the central issue in language teaching: how to establish this connection between the setting events and the individual's involvement in them. The establishment of such a connection insures liberated expression.

4. Topicalizing is an Interactive Phenomenon

Authentic involvement with new standard features familiar to regulars but unfamiliar to the foreigner is a condition that gets actualized through voluntary posturing. To facilitate such speech posturing, the language teacher may not disregard some basic facts about speech with which he and others are already familiar and take into account in their ordinary speech

behavior on the daily round. For instance, the language teacher already knows that he himself does not plan his utterances at the breakfast table or while practicing a lecture: he may edit his expressions after they already occurred spontaneously. Thus, the language teacher must recognize that the phenomenon of topicalization in thought or speech is spontaneous. Now he must divest himself of the delusion that language learning is somehow an exception to language use and does not therefore involve spontaneous topicalization. It is a delusion fostered by his training as a child and as a pupil and as a teacher trainee. It is a long-ingrained educational malady or prejudice that has created its own self-fulfilling prophecy, its own versions of dramatizations spelled out as "learner problems" and "solutions of relevance to the student."

The language teacher thus needs to reaffirm and reiterate the basic truth he already knows: Topicalizing is a spontaneous, naturally emergent phenomenon of manifestation within the medium of involvement in the situation, i.e., imaginings. Authentic speech posturing require the genuine involvement of the participants in an exchange. The phenomenon of TOPICALIZING is an interactive phenomenon: discourse, or the emergence of textual material, is a spontaneous evocation or natural growth within the medium of TOPIC. "Topic" is a surface of reflection or a topographic projection screen. Topic makes transactional sequences visible; topic serves as a record of exchanges in interactional episodes. Topical sequences reflect the substance of exchanges, and they also serve as guidelines for further topicalizing as well as other actions. For instance, in relationships, people keep track of what has been topicalized jointly according to strict rules of acquaintanceship and friendship. Or, for another instance, in formal communication, all concerned must keep track of topic content and topic sequence for stretches of discourse

long enough to allow the audience to legitimize, in the name of understanding or validity, the coherence of approximate connectivity of the discourse fragments. (In other words, ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?!) As a result of these transactional requirements, the retention of topic becomes a major cultural issue or preoccupation (see our investments in catalogues, dictionaries, almanacs, diaries, story telling, history). The study of the structure of topic and its various references or elaborations (see "topic nominals" in NES) and connections (see "Glossaries" in NES) is an activity we and our students at the University of Hawaii have come to call "ETHNOSEMANTICS."

We say that TALK is the primary phenomenon, viz. biological, and is justified by the TRANSACTIONAL requirements implied in the basic reference of "group" as an interacting functional environment for the life of an individual person. TALK is the medium that makes TRANSACTIONAL EXCHANGES visible. The medium of TALK is a biological given, just as the medium of SPACE gives us the phenomena of place and displacement without which no structure or pattern would be possible as real formations in physical actuality. Thus, in the absence of TALK no transactional exchanges could be recorded and treated as culturally shared positions in experience; thus, no identity would be possible, and therefore, no group life. TALK is therefore an essential ingredient of any sort of cultural life.

Classroom exchanges of TALK are always present and they may or may not be congruent with the goal of liberated expression. Since TALK is a strategic medium for transactional exchanges, varieties or formats of set routines of TALK have been evolved in various particular social situations. We call these registers of talk. A register or sub-register is characterized by its pragmatic functions; that is, shared and co-trained routines and skits form the familiar usages and expressions of exchanges of talk on the daily round of a

person. These are idiomatic routines of ritual rather than "stilted formulae" as many a school child has been told by a teacher critiquing his compositional text! The genuine involvement that any text necessarily contains is reflected by the strict categorical imperative that all text is authored by a particular person.

This shows that we treat the production of text as a personal possession, uniquely particularized and identified. A piece of talk is no less personal than a photograph or a worn piece of clothing. It is marked by identity. A transcript or quotation is used as legal ownership, implies moral responsibility, and implicates the character and personality of the author of the text.

5. Talk is the Medium of Transactional Exchanges

Real talk is spontaneous talk; spontaneous talk is the resultant of standardized imaginings; standardized imaginings are dramatized topicalizations prompted by the individual's attempts to maintain his posture in a social episode. His transactional posturing are strategic steps in his relationships with others. These steps, executed in and through exchanges of talk, implicate the author of the discourse fragments in the evolutionary development of relationship. His topicalized claims add up to a reputation, and all talkers, without exception, possess a reputation.

What is the peculiar property that allows TALK to be the medium for all transactional exchanges? That characteristic property of TALK is what we know as TOPIC. TOPIC is to TALK what FOOTPRINTS in the snow are to WALKING. TOPIC traces a culturally negotiable record of the transactional exchanges in TALK. Thus, what the language learner is in fact confronted with is the continual effort to establish hooks between his reactive, emotional, and intellectual self and standard features of the new setting, features or

noticeables which regulars in the group are already familiar with. Once these hooks are established they begin to draw the learner, binding him into new posturings, new transactional exchanges, new topical understandings. From uniculturalism, monodialectalism, and ethnocentrism to pluralism, bilingualism, and cultural objectivity--these, then, are the subjective shifts that are experienced by the language learner and which the language teacher must recognize and address.

Fundamentally, the language teacher's role is intimate and personal. The learner's genuine involvement in the instructional exchange is guaranteed by his presence (voluntary or not). His presence in the classroom in the role of a student makes him vulnerable to forced exposures. These exposures consist of exchanges of TALK between classmates, teacher, and himself. These classroom exchanges occur in a standard recognizable setting. Standard familiar situations are encountered and handled there. These transactional exchanges consist in the joint, co-production of topic. This co-ordination activity in topicalization work is entirely dependent upon the participants' speech posturings; that is, the postures, alignment, or claims the participants present to each other as authors of particular identified segments of the joint transcript being produced in the talk. In other words, each talker is involved in relationship events with fellow talkers; in such a state of engagement, talkers make strategic steps that govern the next step in the evolving relationship; these strategic steps, called relationship intersections, are accomplished through the individual's behavior in the sequencing of transactions, e.g., whether or not to mention some particular thing, whether to disagree vs. to request further explanations, etc. These relationship moves are performed through the medium of topicalization: it's what the person says, when, that counts, as relationship move.

Within such a transactional history, TOPIC emerges as a natural phenomenon producing a culturally negotiable record of what happened. TOPICALIZING WORK thus draws the tranactants together and binds them as the historical enactants of a real and particular occurrence or episode. When two people talk to each other, they produce a transcript according to shared rules for doing TOPICALIZING.

"Shared rules" refers to "standard practices," i.e., characterizing the contrast between "group regular" vs. "stranger" or "foreigner." Shared rules for doing topicalizing allow regulars to create TALK in an exchange. These topicalizing rules must be experienced in transactional exchanges by the foreigner who is to practice them. This gives a basic pedagogic orientation for language teachers: you must focus on involvements in talk that spontaneously produce joint topicalizing in the target language. This direction specifically prescribes treating the language learner as going through a process of re-enculturation and re-assimilation.

What answers has the language teaching profession evolved to this problem of re-enculturating an individual in his topicalizing?

6. Topicalizing-oriented Language Teaching

In the recent history of language teaching on the North American continent three solutions have appeared and proliferated into various language teaching methods and procedures. These three approaches now permeate the vast educational network that has grown around the national and cross-national enterprise of language teaching and language improvement. The issue of first vs. second language teaching has been largely politicized, in the scientific literature as well, by making them distinctly different educational experiences.

Unrealized in the so-called socio-linguistics of bilingualism is the understanding that what's at issue in any language learning situation is the practicing of posturings in talk. Hence, the pedagogical attitude ought to be to cut across the barrier of poor display repertoire, to peripheralize poor vocabulary and bizarre constructions, rather than centralize that fact through a particular type of practice. In this manner, the language teacher becomes a skilled transactional engineer. Through his focus on involvement in a transaction, he is providing the student genuine exposure and practice in topicalizing in the target language. The student feels pulled by the transactional steps in the exchange; he gets involved in new noticeables presented to his attention by the language teacher or the language material. His imaginings, which start out as wild and inappropriate in the terms of the target character, become shaped and filled and regularized according to the topicalizations he produces in his exchanges in the target language.

The target language refers to a cultural modality. Thus French is a different cultural system than English. The differences are modal and performative. That is, a standard character is recognized by all as the coinage of exchange. Agreements imply a shared and agreed upon frame. Disagreements imply a difference in position within a joint and common battle. Therefore, all transactional exchanges, whatever their content, always presume a jointly held-up frame. When a Frenchman talks to an Englishman, several possibilities obtain, each quite different situations. Do they talk in French or in English? Or maybe Italian? In one case, a Frenchman is talking to a foreigner (i.e., they talk French). In another case, a Frenchman is being a foreigner (i.e., they talk English). In the third case, two foreigners are talking to each other (i.e., they talk Italian). In each of the three cases, the Frenchman is in quite a different situation, some more enviable than the others!

Thus, language learning is a process of re-socialization in topicalizing work: new skills of interaction in talk must be acquired or added to one's existing repertoire; new involvements in cultural situations are experienced and enacted. The language learner begins an evolutionary process where new forms of the self are experienced in novel enactments. That is the primary experience and that ought to be the central focus.

With such a focus, the language teacher postures himself relative to the students present which he treats as a "task group" and in which modality they are honor-bound to volutnarily comply. This compliance is quite natural and readily given. "Student motivation" so-called becomes real and problematic and counter-productive in technological language study exchanges. There is no such problem where the interactions are framed by the teacher whose focus is persistently on the student's involvements.

The language course is to be seen as an instructional framing device whereby students agree to participate in topicalization exchanges in talk using a particular language. The teacher acts in the role of guide and source for whatever the learner needs in order to be able to topicalize in the language. "Whatever the language learner needs," indeed echoes the obsessive search for better methods, for it turns out, unfortunately, that there is no end to the imaginative innovations of each new generation of language students!

The point to be explicitly made is that the teacher needs to evolve a presence d'esprit, a knack as a conversationalist-with-a-group, and that this personal evolution is to be accomplished in whatever technological sphere his fate happens to place him. Nevertheless, it is natural that as the teacher's focus turns toward the exchanges in the classroom as topicalizing opportunities, he begins to systematize his observations about the process of topicalizing.

He becomes interested in the possibilities that might be there for managing topical direction in the form of assertions and expressions. In some terms one might say that the teacher shapes the evolution of topicalizing in the language learner by specifically reinforcing topicalizing performances whatever their concrete format as attempted by the student. Topicalizing performances are triggered spontaneously in the course of transactional exchanges with the group of students and led by the teacher (see Rosen, 1973; Martin et al., 1976). Artificial topicalizing or fake-talk is a technological derivative and is not predictive of performance in real life situational involvements. Spontaneous topicalizing, on the other hand, is the natural process of re-enculturation: it proceeds at an individualized pace and ought to be respected as a personal trait rather than an achievement reward! Topicalizing-oriented language teaching saves the integrity of the classroom as an authentic speech locale. The teacher creates and frames the standard features of classroom situations. The student gets drawn into a transactional exchange in which his involvement spontaneously evokes topicalizations in the modalities of the target display repertoire. Unless topicalizing is made to be the central focus of the classroom exchanges, classroom interactions remain special, artificial, or game-like. They do not represent valid samples of standard exchanges. A misplaced focus on technique and normative expression in classroom dialogues and practice may actually interfere with the natural process of re-socialization and re-assimilation. They fail to serve as training ground for real talk. Topicalizing exchanges spontaneously spring from involvement in the transactional dynamics engineered by the language teacher. Consider, for instance, the situation in which the teacher directs the pupils to "touch their left ear with anything but a pencil or finger." Watching the

attempted performances, the teacher can engage individuals one at a time and in loud-talking for others, in transactional exchanges that guide the student in his attempts to deal with the involvement that the exchange imposes upon him: "No, you have to touch the LEFT ear, not the RIGHT. Left/Right. See. That's right." "You: Not with a pencil. Not with your finger. Anything else. Yes, that's o.k. Do it again." These topicalizing examples show the way in which the teacher focuses on TOPIC as the central feature of the exchange: viz. focuses on the relationship between what the teacher said in his instructions and what the student is doing in his performance. This relationship between what's being said in one moment and what's being done or said in the next is the pragmatic meaning of SITUATED TOPIC and topicalizing. That is, topic sequencing activities by interactants must be made to be spontaneous through the engineering of transactional involvement in the exchange. This is the authentic meaning of creative expression, i.e., unrestricted emergence. The instructional exchange must specifically provide for hooks that will connect the individual learner to the target setting or the so-called new linguistic-cultural milieu. These "hooks" are pre-conditions for personal involvement in the new milieu: without them the act of composition has no ground upon which to materialize, and thus, a substitute comes upon the scene: the simulated speech of language learners who are victims of the technological credo.

What are these "hooks" that connect the individual to the setting? Like earth that connects the plant to food, imaginings form the ground or the medium that connects the individual to culture. Enculturation, socialization, and assimilation are institutionalized procedures for standardizing the imaginings of the regulars in a social locale. To be educated means to be able to imagine

particular situations and outcomes (see "dénouement") according to recognized standards. This allows law and order, planning, and empathic communication, among other things that constitute our socialized lives.

The standardization of imaginings is an institutional application of social engineering serving the basic functions of group life. The topicalization work of individuals in interaction in such social settings are therefore regularized and conventionalized as reflected in current news, daily topics, classic themes, skits, and stories. All of which allows ethnicity its full variegated dimensionality.

But none of this is available to a foreigner coming into the group: how are these kept from him? How are they to be made available to him? The technological credo in language teaching has been the first to fill the gap generated by the phenomenon of being foreign. The next phase that will succeed that first attempt is, according to our proposal, a natural rather than an artificial connection to be wrought between the foreigner and the target setting. We call this a posturing.

A cautious note must be made here in view of the fact that there is a noticeable trend in recent writings to misinterpret the notion of transactionalism, that is, the managing of transactional involvement. Transactional involvement is to be seen objectively as a functional posturing on the part of the interactants and serving to evoke standardized imaginings which give rise to or occasion spontaneous topicalizing. It does not refer to psychologizing involvements. Because of the seriousness of this issue, it should be dealt with in full.

7. The Three Forces in Language Teaching

Language teaching as a contemporary profession sees itself as dependent upon the notion of a linguistic corpus of materials to be taught. Let us refer to this position as the linguistic approach to language teaching. It is the first force in language pedagogy today, both "FL" and "ESL." Though there are numerous methods employed in various school contexts and programs, nevertheless all of these share the common orientation towards viewing language teaching in terms of a graded and pre-defined linguistic corpus based on contrastive analyses.

The second force in language teaching has been pedagogy or the principles of learning. Here, the language teacher orients his instructional exchanges according to pedagogical principles handed down from educational psychology, cognitive learning theories of transfer, reinforcement, and habit. Whereas in the first force we think of names of linguists like Boaz, Sapir, Bloomfield, Hockett, Pike, and Fries, in the second force, we think of names in educational philosophy and pedagogy like Dewey, William James, Thorndike, Piaget, and Skinner. Thus, the linguistic corpus technically sequenced in the best learning modalities constitute the twin forces that have been guiding the destiny of language teaching since the 1940's.

The past two or three years have seen the emergence of a new force in language pedagogy. This third force parallels the development of Humanistic Psychology since the 1930's, itself a third force in psychology, which has arisen as a counterpoint to the twin forces of Freudian psychoanalysis and Behaviorism. In psychology, the first force was provided by Freud's influential writings in psychoanalysis. These form the heart of contemporary psychodynamic theories of personality and adjustment. The second force emerged

as the philosophy of Behaviorism which influenced both psychology and linguistics. Freudian psychodynamics and behaviorism were explicitly challenged by the Humanistic Revolution which has flourished in psychology for more than a decade under the self-assertive and educationally aggressive epithet of The Third Force. The third force names most frequently talked about in education are Maslow and Rogers.

In the language teaching field, Earl W. Stevick has served as sort of a spokesman for the third force psychologists, introducing Humanistically oriented methods of teaching a foreign language. In his recent book, Memory, Meaning, and Method: Some Psychological Perspectives on Language Learning (Newbury House, 1976), Stevick re-interprets the language teaching task, shifting focus from the corpus to be taught and the methods of sequencing and presentation, to the psychological climate of the classroom interaction setting. He draws upon the psychological credos and styles of the Humanistic Third Force: the "T.A." or Transactional Analysis developed by Eric Berne and Harris; Counseling Language Teaching as developed by Curran; Community Language Teaching; the Silent Way developed by Gattegno (see, Stevick's review of our book in MLJ, December 1975; and reviews in TESOL Newsletter by Jenny Bardin, April 1976 and June 1976; and the report by Day, Blatchford, and Berkowitz, also in the June, 1976 issue of TESOL Newsletter).

Stevick includes in this group our own Transactional Engineering approach to language teaching, as presented in an initial form in our book, The Context of Foreign Language Teaching (Newbury House, 1974; see review comments by Stevick, 1976, 1975; and Eskey, 1976).

We wish now to clarify some basic differences between the psychological formulations of the third force in language teaching, as presented by Stevick and some reviewers, on the one hand, and on the other, our own philosophy of transactional engineering.

It is the case that the transactional engineering approach belongs to a "third force" in language teaching in that it shifts the focus away from a linguistic corpus and away from issues of habit formation, motivation and automation. There is a new focus to be maintained by the language teacher involving interaction, transaction, situation, and topicalization. Thus, there appears to be a shared interest in this third force, a transactionalism that emerges as a focus on the relationship between teacher and pupils, rather than on the achievement of discrete objectives according to pre-defined schedules. But this shared focus between the transactional engineering approach and the psychological approaches of the Humanistic philosophy are concretized in different areas of relationship and by means of incompatible interpretive frameworks.

We present in Table 1 a list of the major premises of the Humanistic approach and orientation under the descriptive term of "The Psychiatric Approach to Language Teaching." This is to be contrasted with the remaining portions of Table 1, where we list the major premises of the three historical forces in language teaching. Inspection of the table clearly reveals the tri-partite or trigrammatic nature of language teaching:

- (a) the scientific aspect that treats language as possessing a natural nomenclature--the first force of structuralism in language teaching;
- (b) the education aspect that treats language learning as a problem, and designs operational solutions for language instruction--the second force of functionalism in pedagogy; and
- (c) the third force of transactionalism which is the performative aspect that treats language teaching as the engineering of situational involvements.

8. The Pathological View on the Language Learner

It is in this third aspect that the psychiatric approach introjects the disturbing elements of the pathological view on the language learner. We strongly feel that psychologizing, counseling, and psychotherapy ought to be kept out of the classroom! It is a specialization and a distraction totally irrelevant to language teaching. No shred of evidence exists that language learners are secretly and subconsciously animated "inside the head" by blocks, dependencies, deep affects, unconscious clashes, value confusions, under-the-surface learnings, ego assertions needs, regressive states, humiliation, and so on. Yet these psychic pathological constructions may be "in the head" of a psychologizing language teacher, in the sense that he may talk to himself about such constructions ("cognitive processes") and re-interpret every move of the learner in terms dictated by these fanciful constructions. Further, a group of such minded individuals may gather and discuss their experiences in the terms that were pre-established by these psychologizing constructions. They are led naturally to topicalize jointly in these terms and evolve a specialized register used by followers and a new membership. Unfortunately, however, socio-political opportunities and unpredictable circumstances may catapult such a group into a position of influence thereby dictating procedures that become institutionalized and put into routine practice. At that point the environment of the learner is psychologized and he now has to deal with distracting and often unpleasant exchanges.

Instead, we have available clear alternatives in the management of situational involvements of the language learner. One such alternative is the orientation we talk about under the title of "the transactional engineering approach to language teaching." This orientation avoids the psychologizing

register and sets the subject matter of the language course as being the study of talk. Specializations in the Study of Talk may be drawn along ethnicity lines, that is, geo-political and national-historical zones of human groups. The language teacher is fundamentally as informant: he informs the language learners concerning the talking habits to be noticed and found in a particular geo-political locale. The language learner is fundamentally a foreigner: he informs himself concerning the talking habits of the teacher-informant. Therefore, language learning, whether first or second, modern or classic, related or unrelated, is fundamentally an ethnographic task. And language teaching is thus essentially the classroom engineering of situational involvements. Through these involvements the language learner gets informed concerning the referents of the new talking events. The language teacher is the transactional engineer. His expertise and specialized skills lie in mounting interactions between him and the group of students that engage the participants' attention and focus. This transactional engagement must be situationally produced so that the topic of the talk is made the focus of the interaction. Without this correspondence between ongoing interaction and ongoing talk, the exchange fails to represent sufficient practice to develop the ability to produce spontaneous talk. This comes only through experiential involvement in a real setting or situational engagement.

We would like to outline some specific applications of the orientation that views talk as the subject matter of the language course. Please note that these illustrations are not offered as a method of instruction, but rather, as an orientation to the language teacher who might wish to evolve such methods on his own. Note, too, that only such ideas and procedures.

are introduced that are in the public knowledge domain. In this way we avoid the dreary call for more research and more study.

9. The Six Phases of Learning to Talk

Imagine breaking up the activity of language learning into six phases. Every instructional unit at any level of complexity and in any modality or zone thus takes these six phases to complete itself. These six steps can be defined as ethnodynamic stages of evolution in the adoption of any interactional skill. In the language learning classroom and in the world of language study the students are veritable foreigners. Their task is to copy an informant who represents the talking practices of some group in some locale somewhere. This task of learning to impersonate a regular of somewhere else can be pragmatically dealt with in six natural ethnodynamic phases of evolution. To wit: (refer to Table 2 for illustrations)

Phase I

The first evolutionary movement in the acquisition of an ethnically foreign interaction skill can be titled Re-Enculturation. The learning task consists of establishing the availability of primary situational units. In other words, the foreigner is attempting to be informed concerning the noticeables of a situation. What do regulars notice in particular situations that are transactionally routine on their daily round? For instance, do they notice the sex and age of the talker? Are there interactional situations in which emotional tone is topicalized, while in others they are avoided? What is the range of rhythm in talk as practiced by the regulars? What does it feel like to imitate these? We present in Table 2 a range of skills that

evolve during the re-enculturation phase of language learning. Each entry represents a situational modality to be focused on by the learner. They represent situational units to be differentiated. The technique of acquisition involves doing a functional discriminant analysis--by the learner himself.

In some circumstances, all or most of these can be evolved by the learner himself by listening to on-going talk by regulars as an observer or witness. He is to imagine, merely imagine, what's going on. Tape recordings and transcripts of conversations are also useful for this purpose. In some cases the teacher and assistants may be able to speed up the process of re-enculturation by signalling and marking differentiations to be made and information to be noted.

Phase II

The second evolutionary movement in the acquisition of an ethnically foreign interaction skill can be titled Re-Socialization. The learning task consists of establishing the availability of exchange units. The sum total of interaction skills in a particular group may be called the group's display repertoire. In other words, the foreinger is attempting to acquire particular techniques of initiating moves, and responding to moves initiated by a regular. These interactional procedures are standard operating routines on the daily round of a regular in his locale. The teacher and others who act in the role of informants engage the learners in interactions and guide them through sequenced exchanges by enacting and re-engaging, somewhat like we would ordinarily when teaching someone how to play Monopoly, or coaching a child in cutting up vegetables.

It should be emphasized that the interactional practice must proceed within situational units. The learner must first be engaged in a routine situational position, i.e., given an appropriate talker role in the exchange with the informant. Only then can practice and repetition cumulate in the acquisition of a display repertoire that gets elicited spontaneously in situational involvements at talk.

Phase III

The third evolutionary movement in the acquisition of an ethnically foreign interaction skill can be titled Re-Assimilation. The learning task consists of establishing the availability of standard predications in given situations. The learner must come to be informed concerning the range of appropriate references in given situational positions. The teacher and assistant-informants must perform as regulars might and cover a wide range of situational positions, areas, topics, and issues.

It should be emphasized that language related activities and language practice activities are both necessary in helping the language learner become informed concerning the range of situationally appropriate predications. Let the student be responsible for his own Cultural and Topical Card Index File; let the teacher be responsible for engineering a cumulatively expanding range of situational involvements; and let both parties be responsible for the smoothness and efficiency of the joint outcome. Incidentally, student files accumulating from students' work on particular language or locales may be a useful by-product of the language teaching enterprise. Such Language Learning Area Files constitute an excellent data bank for culturological investigations in history, psychobiology, ethnography,

dramaturgy, and metaphysics. In these terms, the language course assumes a pivotal role in the curriculum at all levels of education, re-affirming a focus from which it has departed, namely, the subject matter of talk.

Phase IV

The fourth movement in the evolutionary derivation of a newly acquired ethnically foreign interaction skill can be titled Re-Standardizing Imaginings. The learning task consists of establishing the availability of imaginings according to situationally occasioned contention points. Note that the fourth phase is the first time that we encounter the notion of a situated display, i.e., a response on the part of the learner that has not been pre-arranged or pre-defined by the instructional frame of "practice exchanges." In other words, the first three phases, Re-enculturation, Re-socialization, and Re-assimilation, are para-instructional activities in the study of talk. They form a trigram that locates the language learner into the position of acquiring new talking skills.

Thus, with the evolution of the fourth phase, there is a distinct gap to be jumped by the language learner. He must move from a primary para-instructional focus of talk to a new position of engagement with the teacher-informant. Now the interactions must have a point! Until now the interactional focus between teacher and students was instructional and revolved around the theme of how to inform (i.e. teacher-informant) and how to get informed (i.e., student-investigator). Now there is the added requirement that the interactions also count as social episodes of talk, and not merely as instructional episodes about talk.

The jump from para-instructional activities about talk to performing actual episodes of talk is dependent upon the learner's interest in having an exchange of talk with someone. This is a conditional imperative for language teaching: spontaneous talk, i.e., the natural talk of regulars in a locale, is always conditional upon the talker's involvement in a dramatized impersonation. Such an involvement occasions standardized imaginings; these are, roughly speaking, what regulars might imagine in particular situations. Alternately, one may say that regulars in a locale have a pool of recognizable arguments relating to a situation. One might call these "background understandings" or "social pragmatics" or "shared cultural premises" or "reinforcement contingency practices." In any case, the language teacher must act here as an informant with a real identity, a regular chat is not merely a representative but a spokesman as well. The instructional transactions now take in the personal stereotypes of identity, character, rhetoric, and drama. Now the language learner acquires a new reputation as a talker. He engages in talking episodes with others and no matter how simple or crude these may be, they are full-fledged. Each further exchange cumulates into an impression of character type: how the talker is involved; what he asserts and what he presupposes about what's going on.

A caution is in order: As Bloomfield (1942) wisely advised, progress must be speedy in language learning for it to be practical; the student must practice and overlearn, especially in the beginning phases. Forgetting is to be kept at a minimum through daily overlearning so as to allow the learner to focus on interactional involvements rather than on recall and memory. The teacher must communicate this fact to the beginner and insist on its ratification through performances.

Phase V

The fifth movement in the evolutionary derivation of a newly acquired foreign interaction skill can be titled "Re-Stagings." We use the term register modalities to refer to the availability of appropriate modulations of display sequences in several channels of talking activity: face-to-face co-presence; reconstructing events from transcript segments; the varieties of interior dialogue; and literacy. These examples bring to mind the varieties of speech forms and exchange sequences that ordinarily occur on the daily round of regulars in a locale. Helping students re-stage transactional exchanges to another channel modality involves teacher skills that are at once difficult but most rewarding. It takes children many years of socialization to learn how to restage sequenced presentations in talk. For example, it can be observed that children will recount a happening to various others, over and over again, re-enacting the same modalities of involvement every time, as if for the first. Older children, in contrast, will approximate the adult pattern in which recountings are re-staged in succeeding instances. In fact, we tend to create a distinct difference between a story of fiction, or a joke, which are recited rather than told, and personal accounts, which are supposed to be told rather than recited.

These differences in the pattern of re-stagings are normative practices in a locale and derive from ethnicity or group membership. In locales where the staging of an account is institutionalized, various particular normative prescriptions sanction the manner of presentation; this is the case in legal litigation where witnesses go through rehearsals with lawyers prior to testimony, and it is also routine for public deliveries where speakers or lecturers go through prior rehearsals. On the daily round, individuals have the opportunity of institutionalizing themselves or their reputation as a story teller, and those who have confessed to it, have declared that they go

through many private rehearsals and practicings, which their restagings admirably justify.

Phase VI

The sixth and final evolutionary movement in the acquisition of an ethnically foreign interaction skill can be titled Re-Liberating Expression. The learning task consists of operationalizing ordinary talk as a routine skill. Social relations on the daily round do not allow time-out. Everything counts. There is no time or place outside the reach of pre-established practices. Hence the ordinary requirements on the daily round includes the unproblematic use of talk as a permanent personal possessive. In the world of relationships, the dynamics of talk is as concrete as the dynamics of motion is in the world of heavenly bodies.

"The sixth phases of talk in language teaching" is a pedagogic conception that we have evolved from our work in educational psycholinguistics and in ethnosemantics (see Jakobovits and Gordon, Notes on Ethnosemantics, 1975;1976). This application is not offered as a method of teaching but rather as an orientation towards the teaching of talk in our schools. In summary, our proposal involves the extension of language teaching to cover a pivotal area in education; this is, the role and function of talk in everyday life. In this sense, our proposal is transactionalist and pulls in line with the Third Force and the Age of Aquarius.

However, it is most important, we feel, to draw attention to the specific exclusion from this proposal of an involvement with psychologizing. The language teacher can have a unique role in the curriculum, the role of applied social scientist. His expertise on the role and function of talk

places him in a special position to objectify relationship, interaction, standardization, ritualizing, intellectualizing, and so on. The language teacher is the informant of ethnicity information: he has a presentational framework for culture, tradition, ethnic character, and human drama. Through this motivation and persistent orientation to present the natural social history of a group, the language teacher becomes for the language learner a source of information about natural history, about the components of interaction, about the situational dynamics of a conversational exchange, about the way style affects identity, about reconstructing stage directions through the analysis of segments of talk, and so on. These skills would be precisely the kind we would pick for a laboratory course in applied social science. Thus, without realizing it, the language teacher is sitting on a veritable power house education laboratory in social science.¹

To grasp that realization within pragmatic limits, the language teacher needs a specific rationale for orienting him towards that goal and keep him from falling into the distractions of psychologizings. For this purpose, we are offering some specific proposals for treating talk as subject-matter of study in the language course, whether native or foreign, early or later. The proposal in Table 2 views the study of talk from the point of view of necessary phases of evolution in the overall socialization of an individual in our society. Thus, Phase VI is the final or culminating movement of socialized talk; that is, it is the ordinary competence required for the routine execution of tasks on our daily round. There is nothing magical about such a list. It needs no further experimental research. It is a recall list! This is the phase of liberated expression, of spontaneous talk that is contained by some motive, strategy, or preference. It is at once personal and strictly functional.

Phase VI is the counterpoint to Phase I inasmuch as spontaneous talk is occasioned by the situational context. Together, these two movements mark the boundaries of the talking experience. Phases II and V are in a similar complementary position: interactive skills (II) form the ground for executing staged interventions (V). Finally, Phases III and IV stand in the complementary relationship that information stands vis-a-vis argument: information needed for topicalizing does not become topic until it is made into an argument. And to do this, the person must be involved in a situation, hooked to a setting. In that case, having to say something becomes an actuality within a dramatized event. This proposal can be schematized in the shape of a horseshoe magnet standing on its two ends:



The full movement of learning to talk (native or foreign) goes through six natural evolutionary phases. This is known as a hexagrammatic system (see NES, 1976). It is made up of two complementary trigrams. The first trigram is practice talk during which the learner acquires basic skills of differentiating ordinary situational components, and practices interactive sequences while storing whole new sets of information about the practices of some group. We have called these three processes Re-Enculturation (Phase I), Re-Socialization (II), and Re-Assimilation (III). Note that

Practice-Talk is part of learning to talk. In the home, we perform practice-talk with children whenever we address them as adult-instructors. In the classroom, exchanges always operate within two independent limits or frames: the limits of a particular exchange within a lesson (e.g. teacher talks to Rex and then to Bud), and the limits of a particular lesson-hour of day. The frames of the hour or day are engineered outside the classroom. The frames of exchanges within the hour are engineered by the teacher. The language teacher as transactional engineer sets-up the instructional frames that contain the talking exchanges in the classroom. This is accomplished through artful management of the student's involvement. We have given a number of illustrations of techniques for engaging students in interactions through mimicry, repetition, special emphasis, and other forms of practice exchanges.

What makes these practice-exchanges different from real talk is their primary focus on talk about talk rather than a focus on talk as performance. In other words, the student is, at this stage of evolution, preoccupied with learning rather than with talking. Excellent! Let him be. But don't be too patient about it! The practice talk period must be intense, short, and preoccupying. Insist on that in your student and supervisor contracts.

No doubt the student might wish to prolong the practice-talk period, if for no other reason than that one tends quite naturally to become involved in such exercises and activities, treating them as projects in their own right. This is totally legitimate and to the advantage of everyone. At the same time, and without interfering with these on-going projects, the language teacher must see to it that the students quickly normalize their interactions with each other. This means that he must coach them to observe appropriate access rituals in all the modalities of relationship and topicalization. Through these observations, the practice-talk stage runs itself out wherever

mastery of repertoire becomes spontaneous.

Clearly, mastery will be differential depending on learner's focus and differential involvement, just as may be noted in the differential skills characterizing siblings growing up in one family. Therefore, there is no period in the language learning phases during which only one phase is operative. Typically and naturally all six phases or movements are present all the time but in different zones and areas of performance. We do not advise treating these phases as abstractions and imposing them as separated by "levels" or "periods of study." Instead, the teacher facilitates progression in whatever direction the learner takes within the framework proposed in Table 2. There is a natural balancing dialectic in learning and it is to one's advantage to move in those directions. It is only necessary to maintain a pre-established progressive channeling that validly moves towards accepted criteria.

Footnotes

¹ It is not by mere coincidence, therefore, that the orientation we propose for teaching talk as subject matter is the same we use in our courses in Social Psychology at the University of Hawaii, both undergraduate and graduate.

TABLE 1

HISTORICAL FORCES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING SINCE THE 1940's

<u>THE FIRST FORCE</u>	<u>THE SECOND FORCE</u>	<u>THE THIRD FORCE</u>
<u>STRUCTURALISM</u>	<u>FUNCTIONALISM</u>	<u>TRANSACTIONALISM</u>
<u>THE WHAT OF LT</u>	<u>THE HOW OF LT</u>	<u>THE WHEREFORE OF LT</u>
linguistic corpus contrastive analysis error analysis grammar vocabulary morphology semantics phonology comparative sociolinguistics transformations paralinguistics bilingualism language testing level anthologies cultural checklist translation reading practice dialogues recitations dictation singing drama language related activities travel correspondence universalism internationalism	sequencing psycholinguistics transfer pattern practice reinforcement frequency salience aptitude motivation attitude cognitive learning theory audiolinguism biculturalism communicative competence programmed instruction bilingual education behavioral objectives accelerating cognitive development Standard English intelligence testing literacy individualized instruction compensatory programs cross-cultural differences alienation learning to learn	situation relationship transactional exchange standardized imaginings performance modality enactment role type authentic talk personal involvement interactional rhythm membership practices liberated expression display repertoire instructional register school talk learning to talk about talk transactional engineering access rituals ethnosematics ethnodynamics analysis of transcripts cataloguing practices glossaries indexing of text

TABLE 1 (Continued)

<u>THE FIRST FORCE</u>	<u>THE SECOND FORCE</u>	<u>THE THIRD FORCE</u>
	The Psychiatric Approach specializes and crosses here from the Second to the Third Force	
	→ → → → → → → → → → → → →	↓
	blocks to learning	value confusions in our
	classroom interactions	classrooms
	classroom psychological	under-the-surface learning
	climate	regression to child-like
	teacher-pupil conflict	trust between teacher-
	encounter groups	student
	communication workshops	Ego assertion-needs of
	EST; YOGA	learner
		deep personal investment
		quality of learning
		relationship
		creative affiliation
		between teacher-learner
		trust/empathy/sensitivity/
		love
		unconscious resistance
		suggestology/authority/
		hypnosis
		Whole-Person Learning
		T.A. or Transactional
		Analysis and Game Theory
		Community Language Learning
		The Silent Way
		Counseling Learning

TABLE 2

Part A: The Six Phases of Talk in Language Teaching

- I The Differentiation of Situational Units through Re-Enculturation
- II The Practice of Interactional Routines through Re-Socialization
- III The Accumulation of Ethnicity Information through Re-Assimilation
- IV The Enactment of Situated Exchanges through Re-Standardizing Imaginings
- V The Management of Episodal Exchanges and Communicative Acts through Re-Stagings
- VI The Operational Execution of Ordinary Talk through Re-Liberating Expression

(Note: Do not read "Phases" as "levels"--see text.)

Part B: Illustrative Activities Within Phase I

Illustrations of SITUATIONAL MODALITIES are:

- A. Age/Sex Categories of Participants: Men, Women, Children - Voices
- B. The Mode of Talk: Reading, Reciting, Instructing, Spontaneous Dialogue
- C. The Mode of Interaction: Interview, Peer Dialogue
- D. The Circumstances of Talk: Normalcy vs. Crisis
- E. Emotional-tone Identifications: Laughter, Crying, Shouting, Whispering
- F. Awareness of Interactional Rhythm: Start and End of Exchange, Tempo Switch, Intensity Switch, Role Switch
- G. Role Identifications: Talker vs. Listener, Initiator vs. Responder
- H. Recognition of Enactment Types: Intensity of Involvement, Enthusiasm, Hesitations, Disagreeing, Ignoring, Being in Pain, Self-Assuredness

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of differentiation are to be acquired as functional discriminant analysis skills through mere imagining. (2) Student is to listen to taped exchanges of talk and read transcripts thereof. (3) He must attempt to reconstruct stage directions therein by imagining the on-going events and exchanges of the taped participants. (4) Student is to later make use of teacher-as-informant and other assistants for active investigation and expansion of his understanding of the taped events.

Part C: Illustrative Activities Within Phase II

Illustrations of INTERACTIVE MODALITIES are:

- A. Practicing Initiating Exchanges: Body Posturing, Facial Expressiveness, Voice Range and Adjustment, Greetings, Questions, Requests, Directions
- B. Practicing Ending Exchanges: Leave Taking Routines, Topic Insertion Routines, Re-cycling Routines
- C. Practicing Maintaining Exchanges: Commenting, Legitimizing, Re-cycling a Topic That has been interrupted, Re-starting a turn That has been Interrupted, Topic Switch Idioms and Routines

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of display repertoire are to be acquired through the practice of interactive skills framed within the instructional exchange. (2) Teacher is to be directive and unambiguous, repetitive and patient, using an approach appropriate in coaching. (3) Overlearning is an essential component of mastery. (4) Teacher style is to be expansive and redundant so as to allow easy copying or modelling. However, the teacher's directiveness should be focused on prompting the student to respond rather than to model for the sake of practice.

Part D: Illustrative Activities Within Phase III

Illustrations of TOPICALIZATION MODALITIES are:

- A. Identifying Cataloguing-practices: Locale-Specified Noticeables That are Standard for Regulars, Common Knowledge Topics of Various Membership Groups

TABLE 2 (Continued)

- B. Identifying Ethnicity Information: Access Rituals to Various Situations, Information on the Range of Activities on the Daily Round, Or Appropriate Topics There, Information on National Identity, Stereotypes, Self-descriptions, and Value Symbols

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of meaning in discourse involves information processing, defined by James Moffet as "the hierarchic symbolizing of actualities" (1968, p. 48). (2) Student is to make up and keep a card index box or file; may be done as a team effort as directed by specific instructions from teacher or aide. (3) Teacher-informant and aides must perform as regulars might (standard operational routines on the daily round) and cover a wide range of situations, topics, issues, and areas.

Part E: Illustrative Activities Within Phase IV

Illustration of ENACTMENT MODALITIES are:

- A. Involvement: Engaging Another in Talk, Having a Specific Purpose or Goal in a Particular Exchange
- B. Having a Point of View: Raising Contention Points, Seeing Resolutions
- C. Dramatizing Experience: Symbolizing through Metaphor, Slogans, Legend, and Myth
- D. Impersonating Participant Role: Taking Turns at Talk, Recognizing Access Rituals, Being Interruptible, Recalling Previously Mentioned Topics
- E. Discussing: Presenting an Argument, Making an Exposition, Constructing a Narrative

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of enacting exchanges are exchanges, i.e. student is to complete exchanges according to his involvement in the exchange. (2) Teacher is to facilitate completion rather than distract through meta-linguistic explanations. (3) Talk about the exchange is appropriate after completion but re-takes are not advantageous here unless continued involvement is manifested by the student, in which case it is all right.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Part F: Illustrative Activities Within Phase V

Illustrations of REGISTER MODALITIES are:

- A. Managing Face Work: The Strategic Use of Access Rituals, Ritual Remedies, Ratifying Relationship-intersection Moves, Play
- B. Framing Rationalizations: Reconstructing Stage Directions, Selecting Versions of Stylized Dramatizations
- C. Normalizing Interior Dialogue: Consciousness=Topic Domain Fragmentation, Understanding=Argument Glossary

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of framing episodes in relationship are to reflect the choices of the student just as they reflect the stylized choices of the talk of regulars (see Erving Goffman's notion of "keying", 1974).

Part G: Illustrative Activities Within Phase VI

Illustrations of PERFORMATIVE MODALITIES are:

- A. Reference to On-going Noticeables: Deixis and Pronominalization, Giving and Following Directions, Performing Access Rituals
- B. Legitimizing Interactional Topic Focus: Moves of Elaboration, Investigation, Justifying, Membership Recognition, Logicalizing, Topic Switching, Punning, Making Recognizable Allusions, Referring to Prior Topics
- C. Intellectualizing Experience: Production of Genuine Samples of Transcripts, Self-actualization through Spontaneous Explorations in Performance Styles, Ratification of Traditional Literary Contact, Creative Enrichment of Topic Domains
- D. Literacy: Reading as a Process of Textual Annotation, Writing as a Process of Framed Presentations

TABLE 2 (Completed)

Notes on Techniques: (1) The primary units of performative displays in situated talk count as particular moves authored by an identified participant. It is the culmination of personal in the normalized evolution of identity and style.

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